XII. PREDICTED OUTCOMES OF THE NATIONAL VACCINE PLAN

The National Vaccine Plan provides a blueprint for disease prevention through the development and use of safe and effective vaccines. Provision of adequate resources for full and active pursuit of this plan could bring substantial health benefits and ultimately reduce health care costs. It will improve coordination among government agencies, industry, health-care providers, community leaders, and the general public. It will raise awareness and increase the utilization of vaccines, especially by populations at risk of underimmunization. Sustained commitment and support of all elements in the plan are essential to effective disease prevention through immunization.

The success of the National Vaccine Plan must be measured by its outcomes (by the year 2000). The impact of full implementation of this plan on the health of children and adults in the United States will be profound in both human and economic terms. The predicted outcomes are:

- Age-appropriate immunization with all recommended vaccines will be extended to at least 90 percent of infants and children, and access to affordable vaccination services will be made available for every person in the United States.

- Diphtheria, tetanus, poliomyelitis, measles, rubella, mumps, some forms of hepatitis, pertussis (whooping cough), and bacterial meningitis (from *Haemophilus influenzae* type b) will be essentially eliminated as significant causes of death, disease, and disability in the United States.

- Educational communication networks will be in place that will inform all health care providers, communities, and families of the benefits and risks of vaccination.

- In a global context, polio will be drastically reduced, if not eliminated, and neonatal tetanus and measles will be better controlled.

- Pneumococcal pneumonia and influenza in American adults over the age of 65 will be significantly reduced.

- A nationwide system will monitor the vaccines that children receive, and will remind parents when individual infants and children should be vaccinated.

- A nationwide surveillance system will report and investigate cases of vaccine-preventable diseases.

- Vaccine safety and efficacy will be continuously monitored, and adverse events following immunization will be reported and carefully analyzed.

- Improved vaccines will replace some of the vaccines in current use.

- Some vaccines requiring multiple doses and multiple contacts with the health care system will be replaced by more cost-effective ones that will improve people's access to immunization.